

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claims 2, 3, 5-7, 12, and 15-19, without prejudice to or disclaimer of their subject matter. Please AMEND claims 1, 4, 8, 10 and 11, as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding apparatus comprising:
sheet stacking means for stacking sheets thereon;
sheet feeding means for feeding the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means; and
heating means for heating the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means,
wherein said heating means is designed such that of heat generating areas of said heating means, a heating value of a heat generating area for a central portion of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means is greater than a heating value of the other heat generating area,
wherein said heating means generates heat substantially along diagonals of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means.

Claims 2-3 (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said heating means is provided substantially parallel to a surface of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means, said heating means has a wire-shaped heater, and said wire-shaped heater is disposed without intersecting.

Claims 5-7 (Cancelled).

8. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding apparatus ~~according to claim 7~~
comprising:
sheet stacking means for stacking sheets thereon;
sheet feeding means for feeding the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking
means; and
heating means for heating the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means,
wherein said heating means is designed such that of heat generating areas of
said heating means, a heating value of a heat generating area for a central portion of the sheets
stacked on said sheet stacking means is greater than a heating value of the other heat generating
area,
wherein said heating means has a single wire-shaped heater, and said heating
means is designed such that by said single wire-shaped heater, the heating value of the heat
generating area for the central portion of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means is
greater than the heating value of the other heat generating area, and wherein said single wire-
shaped heater is disposed along the diagonals of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means
and the leading edge portion of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means in the conveying
direction of the sheets.

9. (Original) A sheet feeding apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said
heating means comprises a plurality of wire-shaped heaters.

10. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding apparatus comprising:
sheet stacking means for stacking sheets thereon;
sheet feeding means for feeding the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking
means; and
heating means for heating the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means,
wherein said heating means is designed such that of heat generating areas of
said heating means, a heating value of a heat generating area for a central portion of the sheets
stacked on said sheet stacking means is greater than a heating value of the other heat generating
area, according to Claim 9;
wherein said heating means comprises a plurality of wire-shaped heaters, and
further comprising control means for controlling the ON/OFF of said plurality of wire-shaped
heaters of said heating means in conformity with a size of the sheets stacked on said sheet
stacking means.

11. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:
sheet stacking means for stacking sheets thereon;
sheet feeding means for feeding the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking
means;
heating means for heating the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means; and
an image forming portion for forming images on the sheets fed by said sheet
feeding means,

wherein said heating means is designed such that of heat generating areas of said heating means, a heating value of a heat generating area for the central portion of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means is greater than a heating value of the other heat generating area[[]], and

wherein said heating means generates heat substantially along the diagonals of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means.

Claim 12 (Cancelled).

13. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein said heating means is disposed along a recess provided in a frame of an image forming apparatus main body.

14. (Original) An image forming apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein said frame of said image forming apparatus main body is a bottom plate constituting a bottom of said image forming apparatus main body, and said recess is formed in said bottom plate correspondingly to diagonals of the sheets stacked on said sheet stacking means.

Claims 15-19 (Cancelled).